

Culture History

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174 favored the propagation of xerophytic and heliophilous plants, and thus enhanced
 132 the illusion of desiccation. The "tropical" animals pictured on Roman mosaics
 114 did not die out as a result of climatic change; they were exterminated by man. The
 182 last elephants probably disappeared in Roman time. Lions may have been in
 the Atlas Mountains until about 1900. Ostriches, antelopes, and other animals
 nearly extinct in the Sahara still survive along the upper reaches of the Saqiyah
 al-Hamra in Río de Oro. The arguments for and against desiccation in historic
 time have been debated at length, and the weight of evidence is against a significant
 change in climate.*

THE BERBERS

101 The autochthonous inhabitants of northern Africa are usually described as Berbers. In classical times this appellation, derived from Greek and Latin roots meaning "barbarian," was applied to individuals or groups living beyond the *Orbis Romanus*. Today Berber is applied as a general name, devoid of pejorative implication, to North Africans who are not Arabized. The people thus designated refer to themselves as *imazighen* (nobles). The European term serves a useful function if its application is determined by the persistence of Berber speech, but confusion results when it is given racial, moral, or psychological connotation. Romantic notions of the Berbers as "noble savages" may be found even in serious works.³ The French had an instinctive liking for the Berbers, because they seemed more European than Oriental in physical appearance and mental outlook. But the policy of encouraging Berber languages, Berber law, and Berber traditions, as a means of checking Arab nationalism, had at best only temporary success.*

142 The racial characteristics of the Berber-speaking peoples are far from uniform.
 141 In the Kabylie, Aurès, Rif, and Atlas mountains one may see dolichocephalic people, with blue or gray eyes, and light brown or even blond hair. Other Berber-speaking peoples are darker and have round heads. Many Berbers are of the classical Mediterranean type. The Tuareg form another group, tall and lean, with short bodies and long limbs. The physical characteristics of the indigenous peoples of northern Africa seem to have resulted from the crossing of several races during widely separated periods.*

101 The confusion surrounding the meaning of "Berber" is further complicated
 114 by the fact that French colonial policy called for a division of Morocco into Berber
 [648] and Arab territories, each with a distinct system of local government and law.*
 In unreasoned protest against the implications of this policy, some authors, sympathetic

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[113] ³ There are many discussions of this problem: Stéphane Gsell, *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord* (Paris: Hachette, 1913-1928), I, 44-99; Jean Despois, *La Tunisie orientale: Sahel et Basse Steppe* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1940), pp. 237 ff.; Rhoads Murphy, "The Decline of North Africa since the Roman Occupation: Climatic or Human?" *Association of American Geographers, Annals*, 41 (1951), 116-132; and K. W. Butzer, *Studien zum vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Landschaftswandel der Sahara* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1958), pp. 5-17.

[113] ⁴ For an interesting example of Berber romanticism, see Edouard Brémont, *Berberes et arabes: la Berbérie est un pays européen* (Paris: Payot, 1950).

[113] ⁵ C. S. Coon, "Tribes of the Rif," *Harvard African Studies*, 9 (1951); L. Cabot Briggs, "The Living Races of the Sahara Desert," *Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Papers*, 28 (1958).

[113] ⁶ As recently as September, 1956, pamphlets urging the Berber tribes to revolt against "Arab imperialism" were distributed in Morocco. The Moroccan police promptly established that these tracts had been typed and mimeographed on machines used by an organization known as the "Présence Française." For the text of one of the tracts and the Moroccan reaction to it, see *Al-Itiqal*, September 7, 1956, and the *Tangier Gazette*, September 14, 1956.